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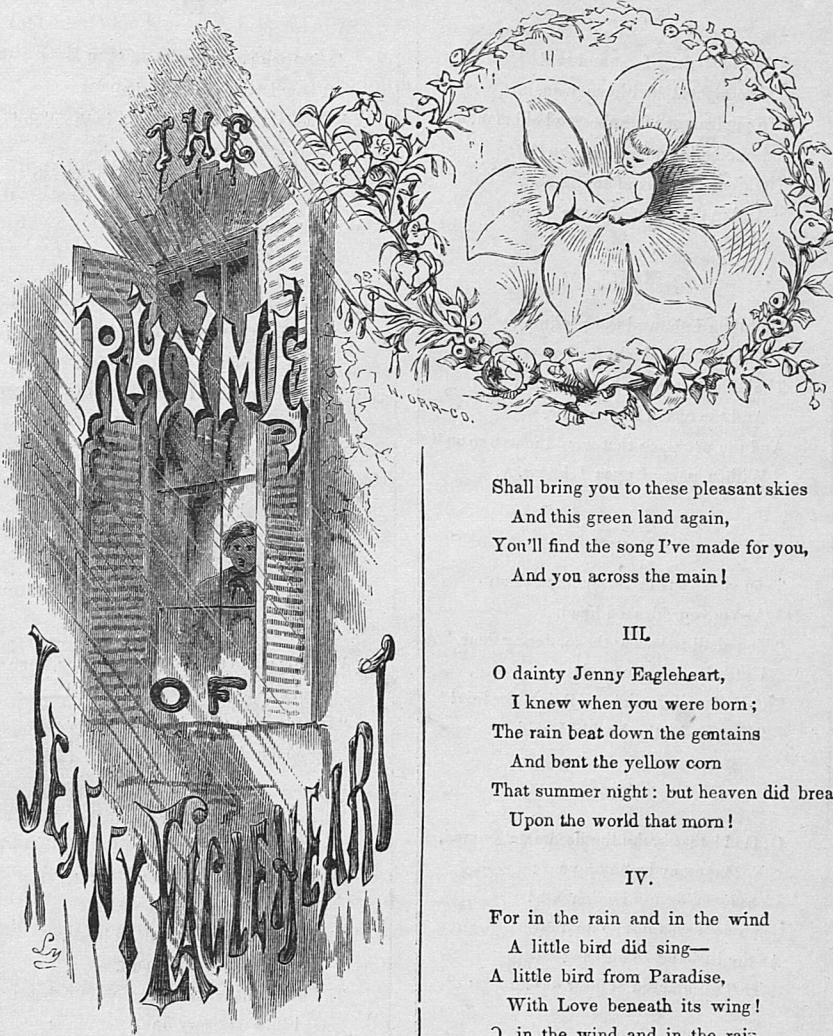
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A BALLAD.

BY T. B. ALDRICH.

*"'Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all."*

TENNYSON.

I.

O DAINTY Jenny Eagleheart,
I know not where you be,
Upon the Scottish highlands,
Or on the Indian Sea ;
But I'll make a bonny song of you,
Wherever you may be !

II.

And when your English lover,
Across the stormy main

Shall bring you to these pleasant skies
And this green land again,
You'll find the song I've made for you,
And you across the main !

III.

O dainty Jenny Eagleheart,
I knew when you were born ;
The rain beat down the gontains
And bent the yellow corn
That summer night : but heaven did break
Upon the world that morn !

IV.

For in the rain and in the wind
A little bird did sing—
A little bird from Paradise,
With Love beneath its wing !
O, in the wind and in the rain
A little bird did sing—

V.

A little blossom of a girl,
Some spirit up above
Let drop by chance into the world !—
A boon of ripened love,
To teach us how the angels speak
And how the angels move !

VI.

At first those tiny baby-hands,
Rose colored, like sea-shells,
Could scarcely crush the violets
To rob them of their smells,
Or shake the trembling dew from out
The lilies' spangled bells !

VII.

But hy-and-by you grew so tall,
Your eyes of sunny blue

Just peeped above the rose-bush
That in the garden grew ;
And then the early holly-hocks
Were not as tall as you !

VIII.

And how you grew ! ah, Heaven ! it was
A holy thing to see
Such goodness growing on the earth
Where sin and sorrow be !—
An angel in the bud—in faith,
Half-blown divinity !

IX.

And while you ran from grade to grade
Of perfectness, I went
Beyond the seas, to perilous lands,
By Arab mosque and tent ;
But the thought of Jenny Eagleheart
Went with me where I went !

X.

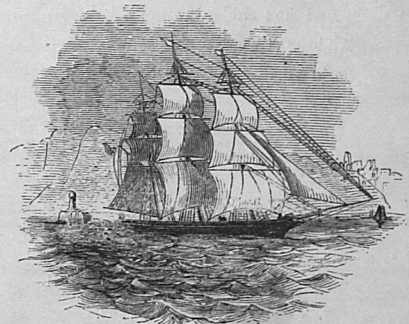
O often in the breathless night,
Beneath those Orient skies,
I thought of you, I dreamed of you,
And with a thousand sighs,
I blessed you for your bonny mouth,
And for your gentle eyes !

XI.

Time fled, and I had gold enough
To live on many a year ;
I yearned to see my native land,
And all my heart held dear,
And to live the dream that I had dreamed
For man- and manv a year !

XII.

Again I saw these chalky cliffs
Rise from the purple sea ;
We swept across the harbor bar
Right gallantly !
We passed the Lighthouse and the Fort,
And the Kirk upon the lea.





XIII.

O how the blood leaped in my veins,
And how my heart did beat,
As I ran across old Philip's bridge
To your garden-gate, my sweet !
How the gossips stared as the sun-burnt man
Strode through the village street.

XIV.

Ah, dainty Jenny Eagleheart,
I found you grown as fair !
A deeper crimson touched your mouth,
And a darker gold your hair :
But I dared not kiss you, Jenny dear,
You'd such a queenly air !

XV.

When I left you for the far-off lands,
You were but a child, you know ;
A woman now—so changed, so changed !
Did I love you less ? ah, no !
But I dared not hold you on my knee
As I used to, long ago !

XVI.

O tell me, Jenny Eagleheart,
If you remember still
The woodlands that we rambled through,
And the tumble-down old Mill,
And the silvery brook you waded in,
At the foot of Stratham Hill ?

XVII.

I've seen the sunken cities
That lie across the sea,
Herculaneum and Pompeii,
And the mighty ruins that be ;
But the ruined Mill on Stratham Hill
Is a sweeter thought to me !

XVIII.

Well, let it go. I sat and told
The sights that I have seen,
(To please your father—good old man,
Long be his memory green !)
The dim sergalios of the East,
And the tomb of Egypt's queen.

XIX.

And then I showed the trinkets
That I had brought for you—
The lucent garnet's heart of fire,
And the opal's frozen dew,
And the necklace that would match so well
With a pair of eyes I knew.

XX.

Then said your father, holding them
Above your blessed head,
"You shall not wear these, Jenny dear,
Until the day you wed :
The Earl will thank you, Ralph, for this !"
"The Earl ! the Earl !" I said.

XXI.

O, God ! that broke the dream I dreamed,
For many and many a year :
I loved you, Jenny Eagleheart !
My soul was not so dear
As the little agate ear-ring
That glimmered at your ear !

XXII.

I love you, Jenny Eagleheart !
God pardon me if I
Have let this bitter love come in
Between me and the sky :
But I love you, Jenny Eagleheart.
With a love that cannot die !

XXIII.

And when upon that morn in May
I heard your marriage bell,
Methought that an angel, up in the clouds,
Was singing to me in hell !
'Twas a chime for the Earl and a toll for me,
That the sexton rang so well !

XXIV.

O never, never any more
Shall I hold you to my breast :
You come not, and my soul draws near
To the mansions of the blest,
Where the wicked cease from troubling,
And the weary are at rest.

XXV.

When the heavy vines in summer
Above my grave shall curl,
Will you stand there once, just once, Jenny,
And say to your noble Earl :
*"Here lies the thoughtless little toy
Who loved me when a girl !"*

XXVI.

God bless you, Jenny Eagleheart,
God bless the man who won
The whitest hand, the truest heart,
There is beneath the sun.
There's the Rhyme of Jenny Eagleheart :
God love us every one.

